

Nancy Johnson



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Johnson Secures Defense Funds for Farmington, Simsbury

Projects Will Create Jobs, Protect Soldiers, and Strengthen Health Care for Armed Forces

FARMINGTON, CT – Congresswoman Nancy Johnson today announced she has secured nearly \$6 million for area defense projects that will create jobs, advance medical research and enhance battlefield protections for service members.

"This federal funding means jobs in Connecticut and greater support for our men and women in uniform," Johnson said. "Ensign-Bickford workers are manufacturing demolition devices that increase effectiveness and safety on the battlefield. In addition, UConn is once again conducting cutting-edge medical research that will improve treatment of bone injuries and advance medical science."

Johnson worked with Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Bill Young (R-FL) to secure funding for two area projects:

- **\$2.7 million** to manufacture and procure Simsbury-based Ensign-Bickford Aerospace and Defense's cutting-edge demolition device, and
- **\$3 million** for a UConn Health Center study on new treatments for battlefield bone injuries.

The funds were included in the annual defense spending bill, which passed the House late yesterday by a 398-19 vote.

Ensign-Bickford's "Rapid Wall Breaching Kit" is an effective, easy to operate and quickly deployable demolition device used to destroy 8-inch walls during urban operations. A significant advance over previous demolition devices, the Rapid Wall Breaching Kit increases speed and the element of surprise for service members, resulting in greater effectiveness and reduced exposure.

"The funding provided for the Rapid Wall Breaching Kit will accelerate this product into production, delivering an important capability for military operations in urban terrain and adding jobs to our Connecticut facility," said Mike Pitcher, President, Ensign-Bickford Aerospace and Defense. "We thank Congresswoman Johnson for her leadership on behalf of Ensign-Bickford and our talented, dedicated workers."

Farmington's UConn Health Center will partner with the U.S. Army Institute for Surgical Research to advance cell therapies for treatment of battlefield bone injuries. With an estimated 60 to 75 percent of battlefield injuries resulting in severe bone trauma, this research will contribute to improved health care for injured service members while increasing our overall understanding of orthopedic injuries.

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“We are grateful for the assistance Congresswoman Johnson provided in securing federal support for this far-reaching and meaningful research initiative,” said Dr. Peter Deckers, Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean, Medical School, University of Connecticut. “The results of this research promise to improve the quality of life for our service men and women who incur orthopedic injuries and to expand medical knowledge on a greater scale.”

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